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WITHOUT MONEY AND WITHOUT PRICE

BY: C. D. COLE

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," Isaiah 55:1.

Introduction: The blessings promised and provided in the gospel cover all of man's needs. In our text these blessings are set forth under three figures: water, wine, and milk in a higher realm than the natural and physical. That which satisfies the body cannot meet the needs of the soul.

These gospel blessings are to be had gratis--without money--and lest we might think that, although money could not buy them, something else could, it is added, "without price." There is absolutely nothing the sinner has to bring to God for salvation. The day that saw Adam and Eve driven out of paradise blotted forever the word "human merit" out of the dictionary of truth. But in spite of this, men in their natural state have insisted that they must bring some price for salvation. Some say you have to keep the ten commandments; some say you have to do the best you can; others say you have to do your part, but they never are able to tell you what that part is: still others depend upon some ceremony or ordinance; and many think you have to bring a certain amount of feeling. As Spurgeon puts it, "They think they must be distressed up to a certain point, and made to tremble in a certain measure, and become despairing, before they can ever hope for mercy." Now these things are the usual experience of a sinner in salvation, but they are no price for salvation. And the man who depends upon them is as truly lost as if he depended upon gold for salvation. The sinner can do nothing to

fit himself for salvation. He is already fit by the very fact he is a sinner. What fits a man for washing except to be dirty? What fits a man for food but to be hungry? What fits a man for healing but to be sick?

Why Do Sinners Insist on Bringing Something for Salvation?

1. Because their reason is ruined. Ridpath said that every man is insane on some subject. I know what that subject is: it is salvation. Man can reason properly on things outside his relation to God. The lost man can graduate from a university as easily as a saved man. Sin does not affect his ability to grasp mathematics and astronomy and other natural sciences. But when it comes to his relation to God, it is a horse of another color. The carnal mind is enmity against God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. The prodigal had to come to himself.

2. Because of their natural pride. Pride is self-exaltation--self-importance--self-sufficiency. It began with the devil when he said he would exalt himself on an equality with God. It seized man when he followed the devil's lie that he would be like God. Pride is woven into human nature. All men have it by nature and it is the last thing that dies in a saved man. Men want to be saved on some principle that will enable them to boast. But God says, *"Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

3. All religions that have ever been in the world of man's making teach that salvation is to be merited. From heathenism down through Mohammedanism to Popery, all demand a price for the promise of salvation. The Pharisee

depends upon his good works. The ignorant heathen will torture his body or make great sacrifices to his idol. The Mohammedan has his pilgrimages and a host of meritorious prayers. As for the Papist, his religion is merit and payment from beginning to end, not only during his lifetime on earth, but even after death by means of masses from the dead a tax is still collected.

Man wants to bargain with God and turn His temple of mercy into an auction-mart where each man bids as high as he can and procures salvation if he can reach a certain figure. But here stands the Gospel with all the treasures of grace unlocked and all the granaries of heaven with doors taken off their hinges, and it cries, *"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."* **Without money and without price.**

Why Does Salvation Have to be Free?

1. Because of the character of God. God gives his blessings; He does not sell them. It is His very nature to give. He gives to His creatures sunshine and rain, the air they breathe, the sleep they enjoy. He gives to the poor sinner His great salvation. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

What did the father do when the prodigal came back: Did he put him in quarantine to see if he had a

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ANCHORED TILL DAYBREAK

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Acts 27:27-29, "But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day."

Introduction: Paul had long been possessed with a consuming desire to preach the gospel in Rome. Just before the uproar at Ephesus, he said, "I must also see Rome." After a severe beating in Jerusalem, the Lord came to him by night in his cell and said, "*For as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome,*" Acts 23:11.

Paul is now on his way to Rome. He had wished for a prosperous journey; he is having a perilous journey. Acts, chapter 27, records some of the perils of this journey, and the verses I have just read bring us to the crisis of it. The ship was caught in a terrible storm and was drifting. The sensible thing to do was to sound and see how deep the water was, for there was danger from the rocks. At the first sounding it was 20 fathoms, and at the second it was only 15. This was too shallow for safety. There was but one thing to do—they cast four anchors and waited for the day. They anchored till daybreak.

This sea scene and the experiences of Paul, is an allegory of the conditions and experiences of the ship of Christendom today. The sea is the world and the ship is Christendom. The world is tempestuous and in moral darkness. The church is drifting in shallow waters, and there are rocks everywhere. Drifting is a perilous experience, and this is the word that tells the truth about spiri-

tual and moral conditions today. There is a drifting from the depths of truth into the shallow waters of skepticism and doubt. There are the hidden rocks of worldly pleasures, godless sentimentalism, and human rationalism. Churches are drifting from the authority of the Holy Scriptures, from the sovereignty of the Holy God, from the deity of the Holy Son, and from the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is an awful and perilous drift! There is a drifting from the sure word of God to the uncertain speculations of men. The thing for Christians to do is to cast four anchors and wait and wish for the day. Anchor till daybreak!

The First Anchor

The first anchor is the Word of God. You will drift and keep on drifting unless you anchor your soul to the Word of God. You will drift and plunge into the night of doubt and uncertainty and be cast upon the rocks of infidelity unless you anchor your soul to the Bible.

We are suffering today because of a displaced Bible; it must be replaced. A big part of the Bible is lost to the pulpit and pew. There are vital truths in this Bible that are regarded as strange things when preached, even in places where preaching has been done for generations. There has been too much preaching of human achievements, and of the wonders of the twentieth century, and the wonder of a working God has been forgotten or displaced. The Bible is the one book that tells us all we need to know about God. It sets him forth as Creator, Ruler, and Saviour. It tells us that He is holy and almighty; merciful and gracious; slow to anger, but inexorably just in the day of judgment.

The Bible is the one book that tells us all we need to know about man. And what does this book say about man? Does it flatter man and say nice and complimentary things about him? No, a dozen times, no! Find me a verse that eulogizes man if you can. It does say

good things about grace-made man, but it says not a word about any good in the natural man. The Bible says that the carnal mind is enmity against God; that the flesh profiteth nothing, that the things of God are foolishness to the natural man; that there is none good; none that seek after God; none that love God apart from inwrought grace. The Bible tells us that fallen human nature is beyond repair and that every man needs to be born again.

The Bible is the only authority on the way of salvation the way of acceptance with God. It tells us that all have disobeyed and must be accepted on the ground of the obedience of Christ. It tells us that we are all unrighteous by our own record and need to be clothed in the robe of Christ's imputed righteousness. It tells us we are at a guilty distance from God, and can only be made nigh by the blood of Christ.

The Second Anchor

The second anchor we need to throw out is the truth of the Deity of Jesus Christ. Our Saviour must be and is more than a mere man. There is no salvation in a mere man, for no man can redeem his brother. "*Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils.*"

Jesus, the son of virgin Mary, born in Bethlehem, reared at Nazareth, baptized of John, pursued by pharisees, sentenced by Pilate, crucified on Calvary, buried in Joseph's new tomb, risen from the dead, ascended to the Father to intercede for His own, and coming again to judge a world that will not have him; that very Jesus was and is God manifest in the flesh. Jesus claimed to be God. He said, "*I and the Father are one.*" And again, "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*" Paul proclaimed him as God: "*God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up*

into glory," I Timothy 3:16. Jesus pre-existed as God. *"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God."* Jesus was petitioned as God. Paul addresses the Corinthians as those who call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus was worshipped as God. The blind man when restored to sight believed and worshipped Him. And when doubting Thomas saw the risen Christ, he exclaimed; *"My Lord and my God."*

The Third Anchor

The third anchor is the truth about the Holy Spirit. Sinners must be convicted by the Spirit and born of the Spirit. Sinners must be drawn to Christ by the Spirit. They must be taught the gospel by the Spirit. Every preacher must face human distrust and mistrust that makes him cry out with Isaiah: *"Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"* Effort belongs to the preacher; effect is the work of the Spirit.

The Fourth Anchor

The fourth anchor is the truth of the gospel. The gospel is the fact of substitutionary death of Christ. This means that Christ was punished so that believing sinners might not perish. The gospel is the story of Christ our Surety, paying our sin debt that we might go free. I believe in a bloody gospel, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission. I prefer to emulate the example of Abel, who brought a bleeding lamb to God: I am sorry to see others in the way of Cain with their hands full of fruits and flowers of their own producing.

I gladly give God the Father credit for purposing my salvation; and God the Son credit for purchasing my salvation; and God the Holy Spirit credit for pointing me to that salvation!

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clean bill of health? Did he ask him for a gift in order to reconcile to him? Why, the parable would be spoiled by the hint of such a thing. The father did the giving. This parable shows the heart of God towards the sinner who comes to Him through Christ. The father did all the giving; the prodigal was the blessed receiver. The best robe, the fatted calf, the ring for his finger, shoes for his feet, music for his ears, all gifts for the son from the father. They were gracious gifts, not one of them deserved. Can you imagine Christ going over Palestine selling his cures?

2. Because of the value of salvation. It is without price because it is priceless. Who can properly estimate the worth of salvation? A man's soul is worth more than the whole world. To try to buy salvation with anything we have is absurd. It is like trying to buy the Empire State Building with a nickel.

3. Because of the bankrupt condition of the sinner. Salvation has to be free if anybody gets it because nobody has any price to bring. Suppose you are dead broke financially, and broken in health so that you cannot earn a dollar. You and your family are living outdoors. You need a house. Here comes a large truck of lumber just about enough to build what you need. The man in charge hears of your need for a house and he comes to sell you this lumber. He starts out with his sales talk by saying that high prices prevail, that most lumber men demand black market prices, but that he will be moderate and let you have the lumber at a small profit. You would say, Well, that it is very good of you, but I am broke and have no earning capacity for the future. Then he offers to reduce the price; he will let you have it for half price. You would say, "I'm not finding fault with the price, but I told you I have nothing to pay." Then he says, "Why, I will let you have it for a song--you may have the whole load for \$100." Think of enough lumber for a whole house for \$100. With tears in your eyes you would say, "I would love to have the lumber but I do not have any money and cannot make any." The only way that man could be any blessing to you would be by

giving you the whole load without money and without price.

The Blessedness and Glory of a Gospel that Offers Salvation Without Money and Without Price!

1. Such a gospel can be preached to everyone. If we look for some price in the hand of the sinner we could not preach it to a dying thief, or to the poor drunkard. None is too poor, too big a sinner, or too old to preach the Gospel to.

2. It forbids despair. If salvation is for sinners, then no sinner need despair. I Timothy 1:15, *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."*

3. It inspires with gratitude. And gratitude becomes the basis for holiness. A man cannot be very grateful for something he has bought and paid for. He can feel no obligation to the person who sold him something. It is the gift for which we feel thankful.

4. It will make more devout worshippers in heaven. If salvation were by works by human merit heaven would be filled with boasters, instead of worshippers. *"For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast,"* Ephesians 2:8-9.